

Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, Soviet Marshal Ogarkov announced that Flight 007 of Korean Airlines had been terminated, that the Soviets had shot down a civilian airliner killing all 269 passengers aboard.

President Reagan immediately addressed the entire Nation about the tragedy and resolutely called for justice and for action. He then proceeded to accelerate work on America's missile defense system. He worked with Congress on the Reagan defense buildup, he built relationships with European allies and enforced strong sanctions that ultimately bankrupt and brought down the once-unshakeable Soviet Union.

Mr. Speaker, last week, another civilian airliner, flight MH17, with 298 innocent people aboard, was also shot down and this time by Russian-backed separatists.

On that same day in which the conflict in Israel also escalated to new heights, The New York Times reported President Obama's schedule as, "a cheeseburger with fries at the Charcoal Pit in Delaware, a speech about infrastructure, and two splashy fundraisers in New York City."

Mr. Speaker, where would America be today if we had elected Barack Obama in 1980? Where will this President's leadership take us tomorrow?

With that question, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1930

#### CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENTIVOLIO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, as I have said several times in recent weeks, I want to bring attention to the plight of Christians in the Middle East. Any person watching the news for the last several months will have seen an increasingly violent, chaotic, and unpredictable environment. The Middle East, and Iraq in particular, are not stable. This creates an enormous problem for Christians in the region.

Chaldean Christians in Michigan and in my district have repeatedly raised the issue of ongoing persecution of Christians in Iraq. Just recently, the last remaining Christians were forced to flee. ISIS has taken the city. For the first time in well over a thousand years, Sunday mass is no longer being said.

My colleague, friend, and mentor, Representative FRANK WOLF, has characterized the situation facing Christians in Iraq as genocide. That analysis is about as accurate as it can get. Christians have been targeted and killed for their faith. What we are seeing is genocide, the eradication of a specific group of people, namely, Christians.

ISIS is trying to wipe the face of Christianity from Iraq. Not only have

they killed and pushed Christians out of territory that they control, they are also destroying the physical traces of Christianity. Churches, monasteries, and religious sites are being destroyed and desecrated. Even Jonah's tomb has been destroyed. And the shrine of the Prophet Seth has been blown up. As a Christian, it is an incredibly heart-breaking series of events that I have watched unfold.

I have been an advocate for human rights and religious freedom since I took office, and what really bothers me is the fact that neither the President nor the State Department have addressed the challenges facing Christians in Iraq. Chaldean Christians in my district have been asking me what can be done for Iraqi Christians. But, as I have said many times before, there is only so much that can be done when the President has not taken action.

The government and military of Iraq are weak, ineffectual, and unable to defend the people of their country. The U.S. withdrawal from Iraq has left a power vacuum that has allowed a group like ISIS to take control and force their radical beliefs on an increasingly large portion of the population. I am worried that what we have seen is only the beginning. Christians are being targeted now, but I suspect that they will eventually begin to target Muslims who don't share their beliefs as well.

Radical Islamists are trying to shape and form an Iraq that adheres to their beliefs. They are destroying Iraq's cultural and religious heritage, its history. If they succeed, there will be nothing left of it.

Chaldeans and Iraqi Christians don't want to leave Iraq, and many in my district wish that they never had to. However, it has become too dangerous to stay. When faced with forced conversions, death, and other forms of violence, most Christians have chosen to flee. Genocide is indeed a brutal thing.

As I discussed in a previous speech on the House floor, there is a severe problem in U.S. foreign policy that needs to be examined. The U.S. began the Iraq war with the goal of ridding the region of a tyrannical government that didn't protect its people. However, a decade later, at the conclusion of the U.S. military mission in Iraq, the people are perhaps worse off than they were before the U.S. invasion.

What did we miss? If the U.S. is leaving Iraq in a considerably worse state than when we arrived, there is something that went wrong. That is the question that needs to be asked and what needs to be considered. It is not that we can afford to make these kinds of mistakes; it is that people who live there absolutely can't afford the consequences.

We need to put pressure on the Kurdish government to continue protecting the Iraqi Christians. We need to analyze where our foreign aid is going and whom it is going to. I have heard from many of my constituents, Chaldean Christians and others from Iraq, that

the aid we are sending to Iraq is not making it to the Christian communities.

If we are going to be giving foreign aid, humanitarian or otherwise, to a country or government in order to protect its people, then they better do it. If we are propping up a government or nation that doesn't protect its people from radical threats, religious and ethnic persecution, and genocide, then it is time to reevaluate that relationship and figure out a better path forward.

I have said before and firmly believe, if countries in the Middle East are unable to provide security and stability for all of their people, then they will never be stable. They will continue to be at risk. We have to encourage stable societies, respect for religious freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. We can't just build strong governments and militaries or the U.S. will always face the problems we are seeing in Iraq.

If Iraq's Christians are forced out entirely, I don't think there will be much hope left for the country. I would like to see Chaldean Christians and other Iraqis one day be able to return home. At the moment, I am not sure when that will be possible. That depends on Iraq's resilience and ability to manage radical threats. I will remain hopeful, and I ask that others also pray for those still there facing a dire situation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful to my friend for yielding, and I am very grateful for his strong stance on the issue of Israel and just wanted to add an exclamation point to the gentleman's comments.

There has been a lot of discussion about Israel tonight and about what is being done against the interests of Israel, but, Mr. Speaker, I think it bears pointing out that this administration could do much to help our friend Israel. And that when anyone in this administration says to the world and, in particular, the people in the Middle East, including the terrorists in the Middle East, that we see Israel, a country whose leaders are elected, and Hamas, whose leaders are sworn to the destruction of Israel and the death of Jews, then the world gets the wrong impression. They get the impression that we see terrorism and love of life in Israel—terrorism by Hamas, love of life in Israel—as equals. That is a despicable thing to show the world from the United States, from any administration official.

It is important that we let the world know that when a nation that is such a dear friend as Israel is attacked repeatedly by rockets intended to kill innocent children, women, others around the country, then they have the right of self-defense to go in and clean up those who would destroy them. That means, when they go in to shut down the tunnels by which terrorists are allowed to enter their country and kill people, that we don't have some do-gooder from the United States rush in

and say: Hold on. Hold on. We realize you are destroying the tunnels that are allowing Israelis to be killed. We realize you are shutting down the rocket missile sites from which rockets are being launched to kill Israelis, but we want to give Hamas a breather so these terrorists, bent on killing Israelis, can regather their forces and get a better run at death to Israelis.

That is a disastrous foreign policy. You don't put as equals terrorists and a country that loves life, and it loves life so much that, unlike any military operation I am aware of, it notifies the people they are about to bomb before they bomb so people can clear out. That is extraordinary.

The burden of proof on Israel that is placed there by some in this administration and by others who love the terrorists and hate those who simply want to live in peace is unbearable. It is time the United States showed itself to be a friend of Israel.

The good news is, in this body, in this House, and even at the other end in the Senate, though we disagree profoundly on so many issues, when Israel comes up, we are more unified on our friendship with Israel than we are about any other issue I am aware of. And that is how it should be.

When the leader of Israel, Prime Minister Netanyahu, came and spoke a few years ago right here at this podium, both sides of the aisle stood and applauded repeatedly. That is as it should be. As he pointed out right here, if Israel lays down its weapons, there is no Israel. If the Palestinians lay down their weapons, there is no war. The war ends. That is all they are asking for.

I used to wonder why in the world did the Israelis try to give away land, try to buy peace, when every time they give away land they are attacked from that piece of land. After spending time in Israel, I began to understand. When you see the coffee shops, the different places where people would gather that would have someone loaded up with a suicide bomb, walk in and blow up as many innocent people as they could, or see an area and they would say that is where the terrorist bomber came walking up on the school ground, then you realize they are willing to even give away their precious land that God gave

to them over 3,000 years ago if they can just buy a little peace. But the lesson should come back loudly: there has never been a time in Israel's history when it has given away land trying to buy peace when that land was not ultimately used as a staging area from which to attack it.

I think it was pretty clear this administration showed its cards when, as a method of thumping, figuratively speaking, Israel, the FAA suspended flights into Tel Aviv. They were not at risk any more than other flights from American airlines around the world, especially in countries where there are terrorists. But it was a message to Israel that, hey, you better do what we tell you or we are going to hurt you economically. That message was clear and it wasn't missed by the Israelis. And then to have that followed by the Secretary of State putting a terrorist organization and a country that is one of our dearest friends together on equal standing was further insult to the injury, literal injury that this country had caused Israel.

It is time that we recognize what my dear friend Mr. BENTIVOLIO has said clearly. It is time we stand with Israel. It is time to make clear to Israel's enemies: You take on Israel, you take us on. You may not get that from this administration. They may still be playing patty-cake with terrorists, but in this Congress, from both sides of the aisle, we stand with Israel. I thank my friend so much for helping make that clear.

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his wisdom on this and so many other important issues facing us today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### CORRECTION TO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014 AT PAGE H6318

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MASSIE

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. \_\_\_\_\_. None of the funds made available by this Act, including amounts made available under titles IV or VIII, may be used by any authority of the government of the District of Columbia to enforce any provision of the Firearms Registration Amendment Act of 2008 (D.C. Law 17-372), the Inoperable Pistol Amendment Act of 2008 (D.C. Law 17-388), the Firearms Amendment Act of 2012 (D.C. Law 19-170), or the Administrative Disposition for Weapons Offenses Amendment Act of 2012 (D.C. Law 19-295).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 661, the gentleman from Kentucky and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

#### SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 653. An Act to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia.

S. 1104. An Act to measure the progress of recovery and development efforts in Haiti following the earthquake of January 12, 2010, and for other purposes.

#### BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on July 29, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 3212. To ensure compliance with the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by countries with which the United States enjoys reciprocal obligations, to establish procedures for the prompt return of children abducted to other countries, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 30, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

#### EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the second quarter of 2014, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

##### REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUNE 30, 2014

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem <sup>1</sup>		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency <sup>2</sup>
Bart Fischer .....	6/20	6/25	Switzerland .....		1,339.78		1,137.05		895.00		3,371.83
Committee total .....					1,339.70		1,137.05		895.00		3,371.83

<sup>1</sup> Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

<sup>2</sup> If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.